



Water Quality NewsFlash

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State Implementation Policy - Update of toxicity provisions - The State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) prepares the *Policy for the Implementation of Toxics Standards for Inland Surface Waters, Enclosed Bays and Estuaries* (aka State Implementation Policy or SIP) which describes how the state will implement the water quality objectives for toxic pollutants that are listed in EPA's *California Toxics Rule* (CTR). The CTR includes objectives (called criteria by EPA) for inland surface waters, enclosed bays, and estuaries. The CTR establishes *chemical-specific* numeric water quality criteria intended to protect human health and aquatic life from 64 priority toxic pollutants. The CTR does not include standards for toxicity, however, the Basin Plans do have such standards and the SIP includes provisions for implementing these toxicity standards.

Toxicity is measured differently than chemical-specific pollutants. Rather than measuring the concentration of a *pollutant*, toxicity tests can be used to quantify the percentage of *effluent* that causes toxicity. This is generally a more direct assessment of the toxic risk presented by an effluent since toxicity is tested specifically, rather than being inferred based on concentrations of pollutants in the effluent. (Toxicity tests would not address bioaccumulation concerns.) The specific source of the toxicity can often be determined (and reduced) using Toxicity Identification and Evaluation (TIE) and Toxicity Reduction Evaluation (TRE) procedures specified by EPA and sometimes included as permit requirements.

The SWRCB will hold a Public Scoping Meeting on January 17th in Sacramento to seek input on the scope and content of the environmental information that should be considered in the revisions of the toxicity control provisions in the SIP. In general, the SWRCB is planning to significantly strengthen these provisions. The SIP does not apply to storm water; however the SWRCB may borrow some of the SIP provisions when it develops a similar policy for storm water. Comments are due January 17, 2006. More information: <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/iswp/>

California Transportation Commission – Presentation by Caltrans and State Water Board on ASBS – At its December 15 meeting, the California Transportation Commission heard a presentation by the State Water Resources Control Board regarding the Board's requirements that prohibit discharge of storm water in *Areas of Special Biological Significance* and the exception process that would allow such discharges to continue on a conditional basis. Caltrans also made a presentation on its plans to address the prohibition. General information on ASBS: <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/plnspols/oplans/asbs.html>

Happy Holidays from the Caltrans Storm Water Team!

WQ NewsFlash is a weekly update of storm water and related news for the Department. *Verify information before taking action on these bulletins.* Contact Betty Sanchez, Betty_Sanchez@dot.ca.gov (916) 653-2115, or Fred Krieger, (510) 843-7889, fkrieger@msn.com with questions or to be added or deleted from e-mail list. Posted online at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/env/stormwater/publicat/newsflash/index.htm>